

POLICY PAPER:
Peace Implementation in Liberia

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Liberia is currently recovering from seven years of a rapacious civil war. Recently the combatants traded in their weapons for ballots, holding free and fair national elections on July 19, 1997, according to hundreds of international observers. The election of Charles Taylor, a former Liberian government official, prisoner of Massachusetts, and rebel leader, represents an important juncture in Liberia's recuperation. The truly difficult task of rebuilding begins now, in the wake of the election, as Taylor and other leaders struggle to fulfill their countrymen's high expectations.

While the UN prepares to deploy a peacekeeping mission to Liberia, the potentially lethal environment in the country requires the deployment of an interim force to pave the way for its arrival. This paper presents a realistic policy for restoring stability to Liberia and preparing for the arrival of the UN force. The next few months carry the potential for a growing peace or a descent back into armed conflict.

The US has played an influential role in Liberia since the country's inception. The American Colonization Society transported freed slaves to Liberia's shores in the 1820s. These Americo-Liberians rapidly gained political ascendancy. US influence in Liberia continued after its independence in 1847. Americans trained its army and extracted its natural resources. Liberia played an important role in the prosecution of World War II and the Cold War, with the establishment of ports, airfields, and key navigational and communications facilities. In April 1980, Samuel Doe ended 130 years of Americo-Liberian rule in a violent coup. Despite the change in leadership, US aid to Liberia increased in the next decade.

However, the Doe government exasperated tribal tensions and ignited a multifaceted civil war. In August 1990, numerous factions, including Taylor's dominant National Patriotic Front for Liberia, ruled large areas of the country. The Economic Community of West African States responded by dispatching a peacekeeping force, known as ECOMOG, to quell the violence. ECOMOG finally persuaded the factions to commit to a negotiated peace in August 1996, after years of intermittent warfare.

Today Liberians are celebrating their peaceful national elections as ECOMOG, with a budding crisis looming in Sierra Leone, prepares for its departure in six months. Meanwhile, the UN is marshalling an international force to shepherd Liberia's fragile peace. The US has three

policy options for restoring Liberia's stability and preparing for the arrival of the UN force, should it choose to do so.

1. The US can take a multilateral approach in coordination with ECOMOG. This option calls for an American brigade to join ECOMOG, which could then deploy throughout the country. It employs a relatively simple operational concept and small US force. However, relying upon ECOMOG presents important disadvantages. First, ECOMOG has already diverted forces to Sierra Leone, with more to follow if that situation deteriorates. Second, ECOMOG has tarnished credibility in the eyes of the factions, particularly the NPFL, due to its involvement in combat operations earlier in the war.
2. The US can act unilaterally by deploying a substantial US force, in excess of a division, to replace ECOMOG. This offers the greatest measure of operational control to the mission commander, which could prove important if security conditions erode. However, the sizable US force will have a considerable effect on America's ability to confront two Major Regional Contingencies.
3. The US can act multilaterally by deploying with an international force and replacing ECOMOG. This approach calls for a US force of two brigades. While this option has the coordination problems inherent in all multinational operations, the US contingent, comprising the majority of the force, facilitates operational control. Additionally it shares the burden of restoring Liberian stability with the international community while avoiding the pitfalls associated with ECOMOG.

Option 3 presents the best policy for restoring stability in Liberia while preparing for the arrival of the UN peacekeeping force. It maximizes US control of the operation, which could prove decisive should lethal force become necessary, while sharing the burden with the international community. Finally, the size of the US commitment does not significantly impede America's ability to meet two Major Regional Contingencies.

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ACRONYMS

| | |
|-----------|--|
| AFL | Armed Forces of Liberia |
| APP | Alliance of Political Parties |
| ASD SOLIC | Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict |
| CMOC | Civil-Military Operations Center |
| ECOMOG | Economic Community of West African States Cease-fire Monitoring Group |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of West African States |
| ICITAP | International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program |
| INPFL | Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia |
| LPC | Liberian People's Council |
| MIF | Multinational Implementation Force |
| NPFL | National Patriotic Front of Liberia |
| NPP | National Patriotic Party |
| OAU | Organization of African Unity |
| SECDEF | Secretary of Defense |
| ULIMO | United Liberation Movement of Liberians for Democracy |
| UNOMIL | UN Observer Mission in Liberia |
| UP | Unity Party |
| USFL | US Forces-Liberia |
| USIF | US Implementation Force |

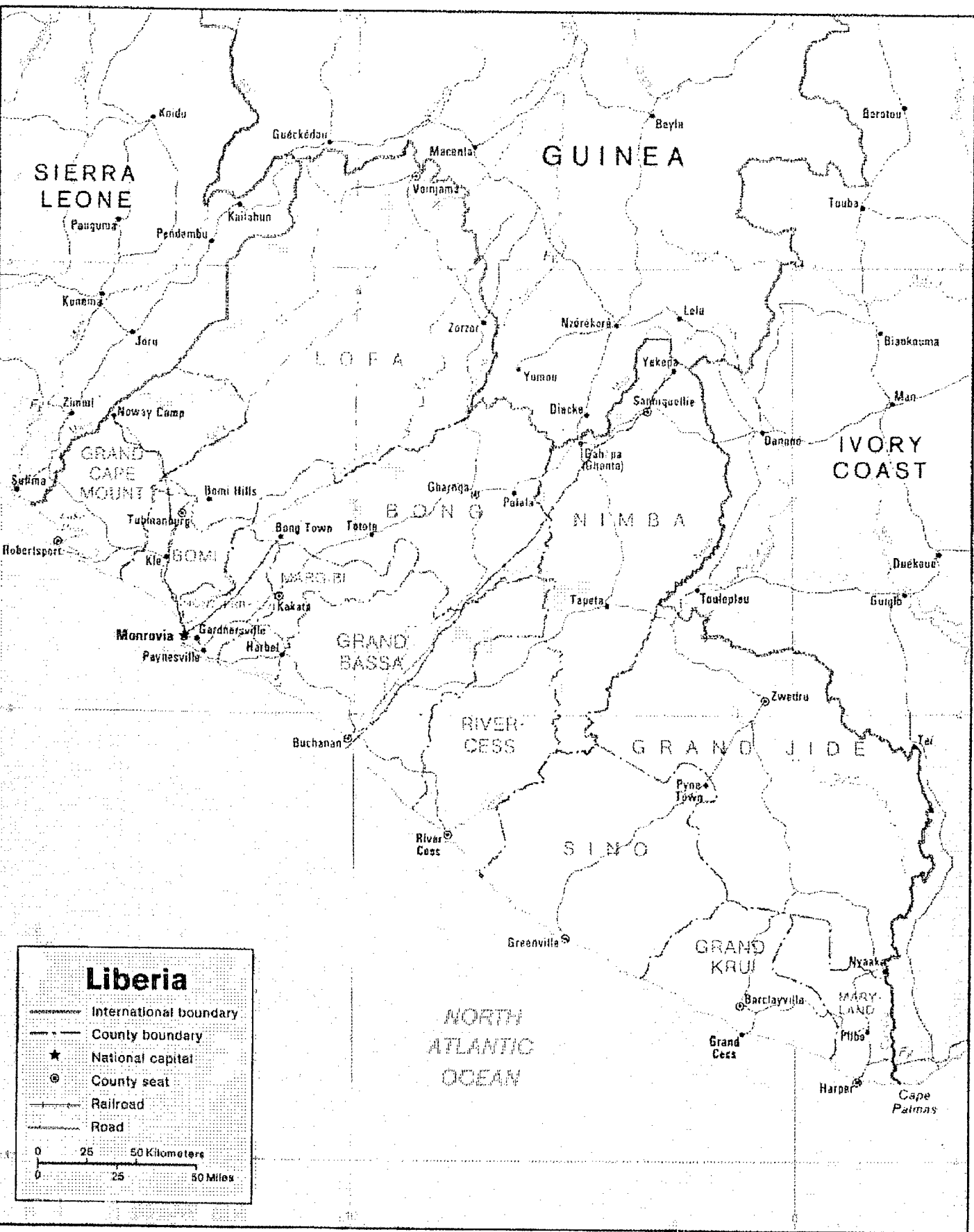
DEFINITIONS

Peacekeeping (as defined by the UN) - an operation involving military personnel, but without enforcement powers, established by the United Nations to help maintain or restore peace in areas of conflict. Prerequisites for peacekeeping are that the belligerents have agreed to peace and consent to the presence of peacekeepers. Peacekeepers lack heavy armaments and are capable of only defensive operations

Peace Enforcement (as defined by the US Army Field Manual 100-23, Peace Operations) - the application of military force or the threat of its use, normally pursuant to international authorization, to compel compliance with generally accepted resolutions or sanctions. The purpose of peace enforcement is to maintain or restore peace and support diplomatic efforts to reach a long-term political settlement. The major difference between peace enforcement and peacekeeping is the absence of consent by all of the warring parties. Peace enforcement requires heavily armed forces capable of offensive combat operations.

Peace Implementation (as defined by Lieutenant Colonel Charles R. Gregory in Peace Operations in Failed States: The Emerging Concept of Peace Implementation) - military operations undertaken to oversee and implement an agreed cease fire or peace treaty. The implementation force has the authority to use necessary force to implement the terms of the agreement. The implementation force will be large, well armed and capable of conducting limited offensive operations against rogue groups or individuals.

This new term came into vogue after the signing of the Dayton Peace Accord. The title of the original force that began to fulfill the accord was the Bosnia Peace Implementation Force (IFOR). IFORs mission was to enforce the implementation of the Dayton Accords. It differed from peacekeeping because of its enforcement authority. It also differed from peace enforcement because all sides consented to the presence of IFOR. Enforcement operations, should the implementation force deem them necessary, will be directed at forces resisting their own leadership.



Liberia

- International boundary
- County boundary
- National capital
- County seat
- Railroad
- Road

0 25 50 Kilometers
0 25 50 Miles

I. INTRODUCTION

The Problem

This policy paper is based on a fictional appeal for support from the United Nations. In May 1997, the UN Secretary General requested US assistance in restoring stability to Liberia, which is attempting to recover after seven years of civil war. The conflict has ravaged Liberia while destabilizing its neighbors. This is particularly true of Sierra Leone, where a military coup deposed that country's elected leader last May. Currently, a window of opportunity exists for the international community to make a sizable positive impact on Liberia. Exhausted after years of war, the combatants have begun to lay down their arms and have recently completed national elections, as mandated by a 1996 peace agreement. The elections and their immediate aftermath represent a decisive point for Liberia, carrying the potential for peace or a return to war.

The Security Council is preparing to deploy a UN peacekeeping mission to the country to replace West African forces that plan to leave in early 1998. However, the lengthy time required to marshal the necessary forces, and the potentially volatile situation in Liberia, necessitates the deployment of a force to pave the way for the UN. The President of the United States is seriously considering rendering assistance. He has directed the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) to recommend a policy option for intervening in Liberia and restoring the internal stability that is necessary for it to return to the community of nations. The SECDEF charged the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD SOLIC) with devising a plan to achieve these ends. The author, as a member of the ASD SOLICs staff, has formulated three policy options for restoring stability to Liberia, recommending the best for the SECDEFs approval.

Background

America's Link to Liberia

Liberia, located on the western coast of Africa, is a country with an area of 43,000 square miles, slightly larger than the state of Tennessee. Its neighbors include Sierra Leone to the north-west, Guinea to the north, and Ivory Coast to the east. The country has seventeen ethnic groups, all of which comprise less than twenty percent of the population. The largest of these groups are

the Mano and Gio in the north, the Mandingo in the west, and the Krahn in the northeast.

Additionally, the indigenous groups are slowly assimilating the small elite of "Americo-Liberians."

This group comprises the descendants of freed slaves, brought to Liberia by the American Colonization Society in the 1820s. Although the Americo-Liberians never constituted more than five percent of the entire population, they gained political ascendancy. In 1847, Liberia adopted an American-style constitution and declared itself an independent republic. That year, the Americo-Liberians' "True Whig Party" began a period of uninterrupted rule that endured until 1980.

American interest and involvement in Liberia did not end with the country's independence. In the mid to late eighteenth century US warships periodically appeared off Liberia's shores to quell indigenous unrest or to discourage colonial advances by France and Britain. However, the US refused to issue a de facto guarantee of Liberia's independence and territorial integrity. In 1912, President Taft dispatched three former US Army officers to train the infant Liberian army, then known as the Frontier Force.

In 1926, the Liberian government awarded a ninety-nine year lease of a million acres of land, the largest rubber plantation in the world, to a US firm. After America's entry into World War Two, the US constructed modern airport and seaport facilities outside of Monrovia. They became a vital conduit for movement of men and supplies to the battlefields of North Africa and southern Europe. The port also facilitated US ventures to export iron ore from Liberia's interior, which accounted for seventy percent of the country's total export earnings by 1987.

During the Cold War, Liberia allied itself with the West. In the 1950s, the US established a permanent training mission in Liberia and the two countries signed a mutual defense pact. America dispensed \$41 million in aid to Liberia from 1946 to 1960, the fourth largest sum in the sub-Saharan region. During the 1960s, the US built communications facilities in Liberia to relay diplomatic and intelligence traffic to and from its embassies in sub-Saharan Africa. Additionally, the US erected a Voice of America transmitter to broadcast throughout the continent. On Liberia's coast, the US Coast Guard constructed an Omega navigational station, one of only eight in the world, to guide shipping traffic in the eastern Atlantic. The US provided \$280 million to Liberia from 1962 to 1980, the largest amount of aid, in per capita terms, of any African country.

Centralized political control and economic exploitation characterized the True Whig Party's reign. Despite attempts at reform, domestic opposition grew in the 1970s. Political tension combined with two other destabilizing factors: a proposal to raise the price of rice, and the government's insufficient budgeting of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL). On April 12, 1980, Americo-Liberian rule ended in coup staged by members of the AFL. Samuel Doe, a Krahn sergeant became Liberia's Head of State. The indigenous population initially supported the coup as it effectively ended what they considered the hostile rule of the Americo-Liberians.

America continued its relationship with Liberia after Samuel Doe took power. The Carter administration approved an aid package for Liberia in 1980, after conducting a policy review, as a means to maintain influence in the country. US aid for Liberia continued to grow after the election of Ronald Reagan, totaling \$402 million from 1981 to 1985.

Additionally, US law enforcement officials arrested Charles Taylor, the former head of Liberia's General Services Administration and a critic of Doe's, in 1984 at the behest of Liberian officials. Taylor fled to Massachusetts, where he had attended college, in 1982. American authorities apprehended Taylor after the Liberian government charged him with embezzlement. While awaiting extradition, Taylor escaped from custody and began the journey that ultimately put him into conflict with Doe's army.

For his part, Samuel Doe granted important staging rights to the US Rapid Deployment Force. Liberia also proved to be important to other US efforts in Africa during the 1980s. America employed its communications facilities in the country in operations against Libya. After 1985, Monrovia's international airport served as a key transit point for supplies destined for the UNITA rebels in Angola.

The Civil War

The actions of Samuel Doe's military regime were the immediate cause of Liberia's internal conflict. Under Doe, the Liberian government exasperated the country's ethnic tensions. This, coupled with his failure to fulfill promises to institute democratic reforms and return the country to civilian rule, induced the civil war.

Samuel Doe's stated intention was to remain in power until 1985, when national elections would occur and a new democratic constitution would take hold. Additionally, Doe pledged to

end the country's systemic corruption and to redistribute wealth. However, like his Americo-Liberian predecessors, Doe's government favored a single ethnic group, in this case the Krahn. Doe also deliberately undermined the committees charged with drafting the country's new constitution and monitoring the promised elections. Ultimately, Liberia's Special Electoral Commission declared him the winner of the 1985 presidential elections amid extensive charges of voting irregularities.

In the wake of the election, Doe employed the Krahn-dominated AFL in the harassment, intimidation and repression of opposition groups. In 1985, an aborted coup led by the ex-commander of the Liberian Army, an ethnic Gio, triggered a brutal government campaign against the Gio and Mano peoples, killing 3,000 suspected supporters of the revolt. Doe and his followers continued to actively suppress dissent for the next four years.

On December 24, 1989, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), led by Charles Taylor, launched an armed incursion into the country to depose Samuel Doe and his government. The fighting soon acquired ethnic overtones, pitting the NPFL and their Gio and Mano supporters against the Krahn-dominated AFL and their Mandingo allies. Additionally, a splinter-group known as the Independent NPFL divorced itself from the parent organization. The INPFL, led by Prince Yourmie Johnson, fought both the AFL and their former comrades in the NPFL. Civilians suffered grievously at the hands of all of the belligerents. Meanwhile, the NPFL was approaching the capital of Monrovia, as well as other population centers, by April 1990.

In early 1990, Liberian groups made several attempts to mediate the country's burgeoning conflict. However, neither the Organization of African Unity (OAU) nor the United Nations took collective action to end the bloodshed. Additionally, many Liberians expected that the US would intervene in what many often described as its unofficial colony. However, the US limited its response to condemnation of the atrocities committed by the belligerents and to the evacuation of noncombatants.

By May 1990, the leaders of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) began to take steps to resolve Liberia's civil war. By August, ECOWAS had negotiated a cease-fire and decided to dispatch a multinational peacekeeping force, known as the ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), to Monrovia. The force was seventy percent Nigerian, with the remainder contributed by Ghana, Guinea, Senegal, and Sierra Leone.

Under its broad mandate, ECOMOG was to ensure respect for the cease-fire, keep the peace, and restore law and order to create conditions conducive to holding free and fair elections.

Three thousand ECOMOG troops landed in Monrovia on August 25, 1990, under hostile fire from some of the belligerents. The AFL and the INPFL offered to cooperate with ECOMOG, while Taylor opposed the intervention, believing that its purpose was to prevent the NPFL from achieving ultimate victory. By mid-September 1990, ECOMOG had done little to restore law and order in Monrovia. The NPFL had nearly overrun the peacekeepers' headquarters. The INPFL murdered Samuel Doe and seventy of his bodyguards in the vicinity of ECOMOGs encampment, which spurred AFL soldiers to burn down segments of Monrovia.

After its inauspicious start, ECOMOG gradually secured Monrovia. In February 1991, ECOMOG began deploying throughout the country. In the ensuing years, the ebb and flow of the war dictated ECOMOGs activities, which fluctuated between peacekeeping and peace enforcement.

In May 1991, anti-Taylor refugees in Sierra Leone formed the United Liberation Movement of Liberians for Democracy (ULIMO). ULIMO, consisting of Krahn and Mandingo and large numbers of former AFL soldiers, began fighting the NPFL in February 1992. ECOMOG further damaged its credibility as neutral peacekeepers by aiding ULIMO in its efforts against the NPFL. ULIMO occasionally received intelligence, ammunition, and transportation from ECOMOG, which often found itself allied with those factions fighting the NPFL.

Between February 1990 and August 1995, Liberia's combatants signed, and subsequently ignored, thirteen peace agreements. That time period saw the birth of new factions, including ULIMO and the Liberian People's Council (LPC), and the demise of others, such as the INPFL which ceased operations in late 1992. Two of the agreements were particularly significant in laying the groundwork for the relatively peaceful conditions that exist today.

The factions signed the Cotonou (Benin) agreement in July 1993 under the aegis of the OAU, the UN, and ECOWAS. It included a concept for the cessation of hostilities that progressed from a cease-fire through disarmament, demobilization, and the conduct of national elections. The agreement also created a tri-partite transitional government charged with organizing the general and presidential elections then scheduled for February 1994. The transitional government included representatives of the belligerent parties. Finally, the agreement

established the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), and it augmented ECOMOG with contingents from outside West-Africa; Tanzania and Uganda.

However, the Cotonou agreement, like its predecessors, failed to produce peace. The LPC and ULIMO resumed operations against the NPFL. ECOMOG, frustrated with ULIMO's actions incited an internal division in that group, producing the Mandingo dominated ULIMO-K (under Alhaji Kromah) and the Krahn dominated ULIMO-J (under Roosevelt Johnson).

The leaders of the factions reached their second significant agreement on August 19, 1995, in Abuja, Nigeria. The Abuja accords established another cease-fire and set the stage for a transition to democratic governance using the Cotonou agreement as a model. The accord scheduled elections for August 1996. However, fighting resumed in January 1996. In April of that year, the NPFL and ULIMO-K attacked the Krahn factions (LPC, ULIMO-J and the AFL) within Monrovia. These hostilities again prompted the US to evacuate many of its citizens from Liberia. After crafting a new cease-fire, the parties rescheduled the national elections for May 1997.

A number of factors have hampered ECOMOG's efforts in Liberia. Differences between the Anglophone and Francophone countries, both in ECOWAS and ECOMOG, inhibited unified action by the intervention force. The Anglophone countries generally favored an aggressive peace enforcement approach, while the Francophone members preferred a passive peacekeeping role, believing that this would reduce friction between ECOMOG and the NPFL.

Nigeria's numerical dominance within ECOMOG antagonized Taylor's NPFL, the major belligerent. The Nigerians had openly supported the Doe regime. Additionally, many ECOWAS members contend that Nigeria's involvement in ECOMOG is an example of its intention to dominate the region. Finally, ECOMOG's cooperation with a number of the factions raised serious questions of the force's neutrality, further alienating the NPFL and possibly prolonging the conflict.

The Current Situation

Security

The factions, at the urging of Nigeria's ruler General Sani Abacha, reached a new cease-fire agreement in the wake of renewed fighting in April 1996. This ended the conflict which killed

150 to 200,000 Liberians, mostly unarmed civilians, since 1989. In accordance with this latest pact, the factions promised to disband their military forces and disarm by January 31, 1997.

The ECOMOG commander asserted that his forces had disarmed 23,000 fighters by the first week of February. However, differing estimates of the number of combatants hampers the appraisal of these efforts. The UN estimates that the factions have 60,000 fighters under arms, ECOMOGs appraises their strength at 30-35,000, while the factions themselves claim that the number of fighters is only 23,000. Outside observers estimate that Liberia's civil society has reintegrated only 12,000 ex-combatants.

ECOMOG, whose troop strength grew to 13,000 in order to prepare for the elections, continues to press Liberians for information on weapons caches. In March, they located caches in the NPFL stronghold of Nimba county consisting of artillery pieces, mortars, and anti-tank weapons. ECOMOG forces arrested, and later released, Alhaji Kromah, the leader of ULIMO-K, on March 7, after a search of his home uncovered weapons, explosives, and anti-aircraft missiles.

Liberia has experienced no serious outbreak of violence since December 1996. Two possible explanations account for the absence of open hostilities. The first reason is simple exhaustion from seven years of warfare. The second was the belief among the factions that they could attain power more easily via the ballot box. Despite fears that the election would incite losing factions to violence, none has materialized.

ECOMOG recently dispatched 3,000 soldiers to Sierra Leone in an attempt to influence that country's volatile situation. Currently, ECOMOG intends to withdraw all of its forces from Liberia six months after the completion of the elections. At that time, they hope to leave behind a trained national army and police. Towards that end, ECOMOG began restructuring the AFL in March 1997, beginning with the screening of applicants for human rights violators. Additionally, the United Nations recently extended its observer mission, UNOMIL, until September 30, 1997.

Politics

Liberia has an American-style constitution, which limits the president, the holder of executive authority, to a maximum of two four-year terms. Additionally, the constitution mandates a bicameral system of Parliament, with a fifty-one member House of Representatives, and a twenty-six member Senate. All adult Liberians are eligible to vote.

Thirteen parties registered for the July 19 legislative and presidential elections. The overwhelming majority of the country's 750,000 registered voters participated in the elections. Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Party won more than 75 percent of the vote. The closest challengers were Ellen Johnson-Surleaf's Unity Party, with 9.5 percent, and Alhaji Kromah's All Liberian Coalition, with 4.3 percent. The parliamentary officials were elected upon a basis of proportional representation to ensure that all parties and factions have representation.

The United Nations, the OAU, and ECOWAS deployed five hundred officials to monitor the elections, while former President Jimmy Carter led an additional team of sixty monitors from the Carter Center. The observers, while noting some minor irregularities, enthusiastically praised the conduct of the elections. After Liberian officials publicized the results of the election, the UN Secretary General and the Chairman of ECOWAS issued a joint statement that lauded the elections as being free, fair and credible.

While Charles Taylor may not be America's first choice to lead Liberia, many political analysts believe that only he can stimulate Liberians to rebuild their country and its economy. The analysts contend that the former warlord has the political power, influence, and vigor to pull Liberia through the trying days ahead. Reports from the country confirm that despite their misgivings about Taylor's violent past most Liberians agree with that assessment.

US Policy

The United States has continuously encouraged ECOWAS mediation of the civil war, as well as the dispatch of ECOMOG. Additionally, the US has helped to finance the operations of the peacekeepers, through bilateral aid to contributing countries totaling over \$60 million. In February 1997, the US airlifted 2000 additional peacekeepers, from Mali, Ghana, and the Ivory Coast, to Liberia.

Since 1990, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) has provided \$420 million in emergency aid, through fiscal year 1996. USAID has earmarked \$52 million for the purposes of building democracy and providing humanitarian assistance during Fiscal Year 1997. The pre-election activities of USAID focused on rebuilding civil society, conflict resolution, media campaigns on democracy and human rights, and support for elections. Additionally, the United

States contributed nearly \$6M to stage the elections, after ECOWAS postponed them due to lack of funds in May.

With the elections concluded, USAID will focus its efforts on four areas: conflict resolution, mediation and reconciliation, human rights, and post-election democratic consolidation. USAID will continue to implement its programs through American nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), such as the Carter Center, the National Democratic Institute, the African American Institute, and the Friends of Liberia.

II. POLICY DEVELOPMENT

America's previous experiences with peace operations, particularly those in Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia, provided a guide in formulating options for the potential deployment to Liberia. The author developed various policy options with uniform objectives, constraints, limitations, and rules of engagement. Each policy option refers to the peace implementation force as either the Multinational Implementation Force (MIF) or the US Implementation Force (USIF) depending upon the specifics of that particular option.

Objectives

The mission of the peace implementation force is to oversee and enforce the execution of the Abuja Agreement. The implementation force will act impartially to ensure the accomplishment of the Abuja accord. The force will monitor and enforce the cease-fire, control all airspace over Liberia, and create a secure environment in which civilian organizations, both governmental and NGOs, can assist the population in rebuilding the country.

The commander of the implementation force must make a subjective judgment as to the achievement of secure and stable conditions in Liberia. The implementation force will employ a number of methods to assess the country's progress toward a stable environment. These include incident reports of civil unrest, intelligence estimates on faction activity, and outright breaches of the cease-fire.

The implementation force's role in further disarmament of the factions will not include house-to-house searches for arms. However, the implementation force will institute a weapons

buy-back program to induce Liberians to relinquish their weapons. Additionally, the force will seize weapons and equipment caches unearthed through reliable tips and intelligence reports.

The US will assume responsibility from ECOMOG for training the new Armed Forces of Liberia. American personnel will play a critical role in recruiting, organizing and preparing the AFL to take its place as an arm of a democratic Liberian government. When the AFL progresses to a point where it is capable of commencing security operations, US soldiers will accompany and advise units down to platoon level.

The implementation force will not be responsible for providing humanitarian assistance to the people of Liberia. However, the force will support humanitarian assistance efforts provided that the necessary assets are available, and that providing military support does not interfere with the achievement of a stable environment. Military assistance may include the transportation of humanitarian assistance personnel and supplies. Additionally, the military will provide security to those personnel and supplies when necessary. Finally, while military engineers will primarily focus on force protection measures, many of their projects will have a positive collateral effect on humanitarian assistance efforts. These projects include the restoration and maintenance of critical lines of communication, airfields, port facilities, and power generation.

As with humanitarian assistance, responsibility for rebuilding Liberia's debilitated infrastructure falls to civilian agencies and NGOs. This long-term multifaceted venture must concentrate on measures that prepare the Liberians to function without the support of the international community. These measures, many of which NGOs have already initiated, include refurbishing health and education systems, reestablishing Liberia's agricultural support system, and providing practical vocational training such as carpentry and light construction. Additionally, NGOs have initiated programs to reintegrate former combatants, many of them under the age of fifteen, into civilian life. These programs provide counseling, education, and vocational training.

The implementation force's activities will have a collateral impact on these rebuilding efforts as well. As stated earlier, engineers will repair critical roads, ports and airfields, and restore electrical power when necessary. These projects will facilitate travel, communication, and commerce. The implementation force may also dispatch its engineers to assist in rehabilitating local marketplaces. Finally, Civil Affairs soldiers will play a key role in rebuilding the country's civil government. As in Haiti, they will serve as advisors to the municipal and national ministries

in Monrovia and the outlying counties. The existence of a democratic Liberian constitution will aid in this process.

Assumptions

- American forces will participate in the UN-led mission that relieves the US-led mission.
- The situation calls for an implementation force of approximately 20,000 troops, including four infantry brigades and assorted support troops. This permits a soldier to population ratio of 8/1000. This is twice the ratio employed during Operation Restore Democracy in Haiti. The difference in force size is due to the extremely high level of violence in Liberia's civil war, and its potential for a recurrence.

Constraints and Limitations

In accordance with the Secretary of Defense's guidance, the author developed policy options with a number of constraints in mind. Additionally, the evolving situation in Liberia, and the rest of West Africa, has created its own constraints. These considerations include the following:

- the principle factions must consent to the deployment of the implementation force,
- the implementation force must be capable of limited offensive operations against rogue groups,
- the operation's end state must incorporate the transfer of authority from the US-led force to the UN-led force (UNOMIL II),
- the operation must limit the impact on the US ability to confront two Major Regional Contingencies (MRCs) nearly simultaneously,
- the ongoing Bosnia mission (Operation Joint Guard) limits the availability of airlift for this operation,
- and the increasing possibility of ECOMOG involvement in Sierra Leone's current crisis. This may hasten the departure of ECOMOG forces from Liberia, currently scheduled to leave six months after the conclusion of the elections. For planning purposes, anticipate ECOMOG to depart on February 1, 1998, six months after the inauguration of the Taylor government.

Issues

- Tensions among Liberia's various tribes and ethnic groups will pose a potential threat to security until Charles Taylor's government proves that it is one of inclusion.
- Integrating all of the tribal and ethnic groups into the new AFL will serve as a vehicle to integrate the remainder of Liberian society and to reduce ethnic tensions. However, integration, rather than permitting one group to dominate, will reduce the AFL's operational effectiveness in the short-term.
- Reintegration of ex-combatants into society is a key to establishing and maintaining long-term stability. The former soldiers present a latent source of internal strife. Failure to provide adequate vocational training and education for the ex-combatants could lead to renewed unrest, if they return to their violent ways.

Rules of Engagement

The implementation force is authorized to take actions as required, to include the use of necessary force, to ensure compliance with the Abuja Agreement and to guarantee its own safety. The factions must agree to this provision in the course of giving their consent to the deployment of the implementation force. Should they become necessary, the implementation force must carefully control and direct any offensive operations, while avoiding search and destroy style sweeps in heavily populated areas. Commanders must refrain from employing heavy firepower.

III. POLICY OPTIONS

Option 1 (Multilateral, with ECOMOG)

The United States dispatches a moderately sized force to Liberia. Upon arrival, the US force assumes operational control of ECOMOG. The combined US and ECOMOG force comprises the Multinational Implementation Force (MIF). After the MIF creates a secure environment, the UN will assume the duties and responsibilities of the multinational force.

The US will provide the MIF's commander and its staff. The command elements of the MIF and the US Forces-Liberia (USFL) will be two distinct bodies. The MIF commander will serve as the immediate subordinate of a US Special Representative of Ambassadorial rank. The Special Representative will be responsible for the operations of all US Government civilian

agencies. Additionally, he will coordinate US efforts with those of the international NGOs and the civilian agencies of any other governments. The MIF will establish a Civil-Military Operations Center to coordinate the military and civilian efforts of the force.

Force Package

Initially, the bulk of the USFL will consist of a Marine expeditionary brigade (MEB). A US Army light infantry brigade, with an attached mechanized battalion, will eventually replace the Marine brigade. The USFL will operate primarily in Monrovia and its immediate surroundings. The arrival of the US force will permit ECOMOG to move its forces from Monrovia into the countryside, strengthening the MIF's presence in rural areas. The US and ECOMOG contingents of the MIF will be responsible for establishing a secure environment and dissuading the factions from violating the cease-fire in their respective operational areas. The USFL will also provide a rapid reaction force to support MIF units in distress.

In addition to the standard complement of forces of the Marine and Army brigades, DOD will augment the USFL with additional aviation, engineer, and military police assets. The US Special Operations Command will also provide civil affairs, psychological operations and special forces units to the USFL. Civil affairs personnel will conduct assessments of Liberia's infrastructure and its civil government to determine the country's needs. These assessments will also facilitate the humanitarian relief and nation building efforts of the civilian agencies and NGOs. The MIF will employ the psychological operations units primarily in the role of disseminating public information to the Liberian people through news leaflets, loud speakers and radio broadcasts. The special forces units will execute two missions: organize and train the new Armed Forces of Liberia, and establish liaison teams with ECOMOG forces down to battalion level.

The US Navy's role will include its standard support package for the MEB. Additionally, after the departure of the MEB and its complement of helicopter and fighter-attack aircraft, the Navy will provide attack aircraft to support ground operations when necessary. The primary means of transport and resupply will be by ship. The US Air Force will provide an alternate means of transportation to Liberia through Roberts International Airport in Monrovia.

A number of US Government civilian agencies will take part in the operation. The US Agency for International Development will continue its operations as specified earlier. However,

it will now fall under the supervision of the US Special Representative. The Justice Department's International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) will assume responsibility for training Liberia's new national police force and the local police forces of its major cities. ICITAP personnel will accompany the patrols of the new Liberian police when they progress to that stage of their training. Additionally, the MIF will introduce a force of unarmed International Police Monitors, functioning under the auspices of the UN. They will also accompany the Liberian police force and serve as a source of professional advice as well as a monitoring agency.

Concept

The MIF commander and the USFL will dispatch liaison teams to Liberia on September 15. The liaison teams will contact ECOMOG and the faction leaders to coordinate the arrival of US forces. Additionally, an advanced party will conduct a survey and assessment of Liberia, focusing upon the security situation and the country's immediate humanitarian relief needs.

On October 1, 1997, the USFL will enter Liberia through the port of Monrovia and other suitable entry points in the vicinity. The MIF will then assume operational control of ECOMOG. US forces will secure Monrovia, freeing ECOMOG to deploy additional forces into Liberia's rural areas. Within ten days of landing, the MIF will establish a presence in all major population centers as well as the interior, and expand its active patrolling throughout the country. A brigade of US Army light infantry, with a battalion of mechanized infantry attached, will replace the Marine brigade by November 1, one month after the initial landing.

The timeline for the transition from a US-led mission to a UN-led mission is event driven, rather than relying solely on a time-schedule. The event that will initiate the transition process is the MIFs achievement of its primary objective, a secure and stable environment in Liberia, as assessed by the MIF commander. It is estimated that the MIF will require ninety days to create stable conditions, establishing January 1, 1998, as a target date. The MIF and the UN will then begin the process of transferring operational control, which will require an additional ninety days.

In addition to being the target date for establishing stability, UN forces will also begin replacing ECOMOG on January 1, 1998. This will permit ECOMOG to depart Liberia on February 1, six months after the country's presidential inauguration. These newly deployed UN

forces will be under the operational control of the MIF until the formal transition. The US contingent of the UN force, anticipated to be one battalion, will deploy to Liberia on March 1. Contingent upon the achievement of a secure and stable environment, the MIF will transfer authority to its successor, UNOMIL II on April 1, six months after the deployment of US forces. The ICITAP and special forces personnel training the Liberian police and military forces will remain after the transition.

Advantages

1. This option has a relatively simple operational concept that makes the most of ECOMOG's efforts to date. The US force enters Liberia, assumes operational control of ECOMOG, and relieves its forces in the vicinity of Monrovia. ECOMOG forces can then expand their operations in previously neglected rural areas of Liberia. The US will support ECOMOG with logistics, transportation and communication assets. However, the bulk of US forces will concentrate their efforts in the Monrovia area.

By folding the ongoing ECOMOG mission into the implementation force, the US can exploit the institutional knowledge gained from its seven year experience in Liberia. This knowledge will provide benefits such as familiarity with terrain and local populations. Additionally, ECOMOG will be capable of providing valuable insight into the idiosyncrasies and reliability of the various factions.

2. This option limits the impact on America's ability to contend with two Major Regional Contingencies nearly simultaneously. ECOMOG provides the majority of the forces employed in this option. The core of the US contingent in Liberia, a brigade-size unit, is a relatively small formation. The deployment of a force of nearly any size will have some effect on the two MRC concept. However, the force package called for in this option minimizes, to the extent possible, sea and airlift requirements.

Disadvantages

1. This option is heavily reliant upon ECOMOG, whose past actions seriously damaged its credibility as a neutral actor amongst the various factions, particularly the NPFL. Charles

Taylor considered the initial deployment of ECOMOG as singularly responsible for preventing him from gaining power in 1990. Additionally, prior to August 1996, ECOMOG often allied itself with ULIMO and the AFL against Taylor's NPFL.

Most observers acknowledge that ECOMOGs performance in the last year was instrumental in preparing favorable conditions for the recent elections. However, that probably can not restore its credibility in the eyes of Charles Taylor, Liberia's new president and ECOMOGs greatest detractor. If the implementation force includes ECOMOG, its lack of credibility will certainly lead to questioning of the MIFs neutrality.

2. The officers and soldiers of ECOMOG, who have been in Liberia for seven years, may not appreciate ceding operational control to newly arrived Americans. Professional jealousy may create animosity between the international forces, increasing friction and inhibiting their cohesion. This is particularly true in light of recent comments by the ECOMOG commander questioning the political will displayed by the US during similar operations in Somalia and Lebanon.
3. This option could present problems in control and coordination, both at the operational and tactical levels. While the US will retain command and control of the operation, less than half of the implementation force will be American. Language and terminology differences will hamper communications and coordination, despite the predominance of Anglophone representation in ECOMOG. Additionally, the MIF commander will require time to assess the capabilities of ECOMOG, in order to employ it properly. Finally, because ECOMOG is currently conducting operations, there are few opportunities for joint training between the forces prior to the US deployment.
4. The inclusion of ECOMOG in the MIF creates problems due to its scheduled departure from Liberia. The calendar, through ECOMOGs departure date, drives the deployment of UN forces. An event, the establishment of a secure and stable environment, drives the transition from US to UN control. Under ideal circumstances, stable conditions will exist before UN forces begin to replace ECOMOG.

However, should the MIF fail to establish a stable environment by January 1 the process of replacing the West African force will further hinder the achievement of that objective. It will temporarily divert forces, assets, and focus away from the actual stability operations. Finally, delays in establishing stability will also delay the scheduled transfer of authority from the US to the UN.

Option 2 (Unilateral)

The United States dispatches a substantial implementation force to Liberia. Upon the arrival of the US force, ECOMOG will begin the process of departing Liberia. The US Implementation Force (USIF) will include an infantry division plus an additional brigade. A UN-led force will relieve the US force after it restores a secure and stable environment.

The USIF Commander will be the immediate subordinate of a US Special Representative of Ambassadorial rank. The Special Representative will be responsible for the operations of all US Government civilian agencies. Additionally, he will coordinate US efforts with those of the international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the civilian agencies of any other governments. The USIF will establish a Civil-Military Operations Center to coordinate the military and civilian efforts of the force.

Force Package

A US Army light infantry division will comprise the majority of American forces in Liberia. Initially, a Marine expeditionary brigade will join the division. An Army mechanized infantry brigade will eventually replace the Marine brigade. Additionally, the implementation force will have engineer, military police, and special operations assets to support its efforts. The Special Operations Command will provide civil affairs, psychological operations and special forces units for the operation.

Civil affairs personnel will conduct assessments of Liberia's infrastructure and its civil government to determine the country's needs. These assessments will also facilitate humanitarian relief and nation building efforts of the civilian agencies and NGOs. The USIF will employ the psychological operations units primarily in the role of disseminating public information to the Liberian people through news leaflets, loud speakers and radio broadcasts. The special forces

units will execute two missions: organize and train the new Armed Forces of Liberia, and establish a constant USIF presence in the villages of the interior.

The US Navy's role will include its standard support package for the MEB. Additionally, after the departure of the MEB and its complement of helicopter and fighter-attack aircraft, the Navy will provide attack aircraft to support the ground operations when necessary. The primary means of transport and resupply will be by ship. The US Air Force will provide an alternate means of transportation to Liberia through Roberts International Airport.

The US Special Representative will supervise and coordinate the activities of the US Government civilian agencies participating in the operation. The US Agency for International Development will continue its operations as specified earlier. The International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP), of the US Justice Department, will train Liberia's new police apparatus at the national level, as well as the local forces of the country's major population centers. As part of the training program, ICITAP instructors will accompany the Liberian police trainees when they begin conducting community patrols. Additionally, the UN will provide a contingent of unarmed International Police Monitors. They will serve as a source of professional advice as well as a monitoring agency.

Concept

On September 15, 1997, the USIF will dispatch an advanced party to Liberia. This element, serving as the USIFs liaison with ECOMOG and the factions, will coordinate the arrival of the American forces and the departure of ECOMOG. The advanced party will also assess Liberia's security situation and its humanitarian and infrastructure needs.

On October 1, the USIF will enter the country through the ports of Monrovia and Greenville, led by the Marine expeditionary brigade. The light infantry division will follow directly behind the MEB, as will the remainder of the US force. The American forces will immediately begin security operations in Monrovia and Greenville. Within five days, the USFL will establish a presence and initiate security operations in Liberia's major population centers.

As US forces enter the various counties and towns, they will relieve the ECOMOG forces in the area. ECOMOG will then begin moving to embarkation points at the ports of Monrovia, Buchanan, Greenville, and Harper. The last of ECOMOGs forces will depart by October 10. An

Army mechanized infantry brigade will replace the Marine brigade by November 1, one month after the USIFs arrival in Liberia.

The timeline for the transfer of authority from a US mission to a UN-led mission is event driven. Transition will begin when the USIF commander determines that his forces have achieved their primary objective, a secure and stable environment in Liberia. The US will employ a variation of the ink blot technique to restore stability. In both urban and rural areas, the USIF will first establish a presence in generally stable sectors. After consolidating its hold on areas experiencing relatively little faction activity, the USIF will then begin to make inroads into areas with the strongest support for the factions. The USIFs estimated target date for creating secure and stable conditions in Liberia is December 1, 1997. The USIF will then notify the UN to initiate the transition process.

UN forces will begin deploying to Liberia to replace the American units on January 1, 1998, one month after the USIF establishes a secure environment. These forces will be operational in Liberia when the UN relieves the USIF. The USIF commander will retain operational control of the newly deployed UN forces until the formal transfer of authority. The US contingent of the UN force, anticipated to be one battalion, will deploy to Liberia on February 1. On March 1, 1998, five months after its initial deployment, the USIF will transfer authority to its successor, UNOMIL II. The ICITAP and Special Forces personnel training the Liberian police and military forces will remain after the transition.

Advantages

1. This option provides the greatest measure of control to the mission commander.

Employing US forces unilaterally avoids the communication and coordination problems that are inherent in multinational operations. US air, naval, and ground forces habitually train together and are familiar with each other's strengths and weaknesses, which saves time during planning and ensures the employment of forces in accordance with their capabilities.

Additionally, the benefits of acting unilaterally can prove particularly important if circumstances in Liberia require the use of force. Should the security situation deteriorate prior to the deployment, a unilateral forced entry is the preferred technique for introducing forces into the country. A more likely possibility however, is that unrest will increase after the

implementation force arrives in Liberia. In this scenario, a US force will be more capable of a coordinated response than a multinational force.

2. This option safeguards the credibility of the implementation force, a vital factor in gaining the acceptance of the country's factions. It expedites the departure of the ECOMOG forces from Liberia shortly after the arrival of USIF. This preserves the implementation forces standing as a neutral force by separating it from the tarnished reputation of ECOMOG.

Disadvantages

1. This option will have a significant impact on the ability of the US to wage two Major Regional Contingencies nearly simultaneously. The US provides all of the forces in the implementation force, the nucleus of which is larger than a division. It will also entail a sizable commitment of air and sea lift assets, for both deploying and sustaining the force.
2. The rapid departure of ECOMOG will deprive the implementation force of a valuable source of information in a region where the US has a limited amount of current experience. The USIF will lose the benefit of the West African's institutional knowledge, acquired during seven years in Liberia. This includes background information on the conflict and insight into the country's political climate, key personalities, and security situation. Additionally, USIF will not be able to profit from ECOMOGs understanding of the country's culture, and geography.
3. While many Liberians have expected, and wanted, American intervention since 1990, unilateral action could lead Africans to accuse the US of harboring colonial ambitions towards the continent. African leaders sought, and received, US monetary and material support for ECOMOG. However, they have traditionally opposed outright intervention on their continent by Western powers. The unilateral use of American forces constitutes a significant commitment by the US. This could undermine other US policies in Africa if regional leaders construe it as a signal that the US intends to play a more dominant role on the continent.

4. As stated above, unilateral action represents a significant US commitment to Liberia. The US will bear the entire burden of restoring stability in Liberia, and maintaining it until the UNOMIL II deployment. It will also translate into US ownership of the operation, and responsibility for its success or failure. The importance of this factor to US international credibility can not be overstated. Reduced confidence, domestically and globally, in American power after its withdrawal from Somalia exemplifies the hidden cost of failure.

Option 3 (multilateral, with an international force other than ECOMOG)

The US leads a Multinational Implementation Force to Liberia. The core of the MIF is an American force of two brigades. ECOMOG forces will depart the country after the MIF establishes itself in Liberia's population centers. A UN-led force will replace the US-led MIF after it restores security and stability to Liberia.

An American officer will command the MIF and the US will also provide the multinational force's staff. The command element of the MIF will be a separate entity from the that of the US Forces-Liberia. Responsibility for the operations of all US Government civilian agencies will rest with a US Special Representative of Ambassadorial rank. The Special Representative will serve as the immediate superior of the MIF Commander. Additionally, the Special Representative will coordinate the efforts of the US government with those of the international NGOs and the civilian agencies of any other governments aiding Liberia. To facilitate coordination between the military and civilian efforts, both governmental and nongovernmental, the MIF will establish a Civil-Military Operations Center prior to the deployment of forces.

Force Package

The US contingent of the MIF will consist of a two brigade task force, one light infantry brigade and one mechanized infantry brigade. During the initial entry into Liberia, the task force will have a Marine expeditionary brigade attached. US Forces-Liberia will also have engineer, and military police units. The US Special Operations Command will provide psychological operations, civil affairs, and special forces units to the USFL. Collectively, US forces will comprise over half of the Multinational Implementation Force.

Psychological operations units will provide a means to disseminate public information

throughout Liberia via news leaflets, loud speakers and radio broadcasts. Civil affairs personnel will assess Liberia's infrastructure and the condition of its civil government. The assessments will facilitate the civilian agencies conduct of humanitarian relief and nation building efforts. Special forces units will organize and train the new Armed Forces of Liberia, establish an MIF presence in the country's interior, and conduct liaison missions with other members of the multinational force. Military forces from other members of the international community will provide the remainder of the MIF. The UN will assist in soliciting assistance from traditional peacekeeping contributors, such as Canada, Norway, Sweden, Nepal, and Pakistan.

The US Navy's role will include its standard support package for the MEB. Additionally, after the departure of the MEB and its complement of helicopter and fighter-attack aircraft, the Navy will provide attack aircraft to support the ground operations when necessary. The primary means of transport and resupply will be by ship. The US Air Force will provide an alternate means of transportation to Liberia through the international airport in Monrovia.

The US Special Representative will coordinate the efforts of the various civilian agencies operating in Liberia. The Agency for International Development will continue its ongoing operations. In order to create a new police apparatus in Liberia, the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP), of the US Justice Department, will train a national police force. ICITAP will also assist and advise the Liberians in forming local police forces. As part of the training program, ICITAP instructors will accompany the Liberian trainees when they begin conducting routine duties and community patrols. Additionally, the UN will provide a contingent of unarmed International Police Monitors to advise, as well as monitor, the new police apparatus.

Concept

The MIF will dispatch an advanced party to Liberia on September 15, fifteen days prior to the deployment of the implementation force. The tasks of the advanced party will include establishing liaison with ECOMOG and the faction leaders and coordinating the arrival of the MIF and the departure of ECOMOG. Additionally, the advanced party will conduct a detailed survey of the country, with emphasis on discerning Liberia's security situation, the condition of its infrastructure, and its humanitarian relief requirements.

The MIF will enter Liberia through Monrovia, led by the Marine expeditionary brigade and the remainder of the US task force on October 1. Within five days, the MIF will establish a presence in all of Liberia's population centers. As the MIF deploys throughout the country it will relieve the ECOMOG forces in the area, who will then begin moving to the port and airport facilities in Monrovia to prepare for departure. ECOMOG forces, as well as the Marine brigade, will depart Liberia within ten days of the MIFs arrival.

The MIF commander will initiate the process of transferring authority to the UN when he determines that the multinational force has achieved its primary objective, a secure and stable environment in Liberia. The MIF will employ the ink blot technique to restore stability, first establishing a presence in areas that are relatively free of faction activities. After consolidating its hold on these areas, the MIF will then begin to expand its operations into areas with the strongest support for the factions. The target date for creating a stable environment is December 1, 1997. The MIF will then inform the UN that it can begin the transition process.

UN forces will begin replacing the MIF units within thirty days of the establishment of a secure environment, by January 1, 1998. These forces, which will be operational in Liberia when the US transfers authority to the UN, will be under the operational control of the MIF until the formal transition. The US contingent of UN force, anticipated to be one battalion, will deploy to Liberia on February 1, 1998. On April 1, six months after the deployment of US forces, the MIF will transfer authority to its successor, UNOMIL II. The ICITAP and special forces personnel training the Liberian police and military forces will remain after the transition.

Advantages

1. In this option, the size of the US contingent will facilitate the control of the multinational force. The nucleus of the MIF is a US task force consisting of two brigades, one light infantry and one mechanized infantry. Collectively, the US Forces-Liberia constitute the majority of the MIF. This ensures that the preponderance of forces in the MIF will be familiar with operating together and be capable of cohesive actions. While this will not solve all of the intrinsic coordination problems in multinational operations, it will greatly enhance the MIF commander's ability to employ the force as effectively as possible.

2. This option calls for the departure of ECOMOG shortly after the arrival of the MIF. As with option 2, this will disassociate the implementation force from ECOMOG and preserve the MIF's reputation of neutrality. This will significantly aid the MIF in establishing its legitimacy in the eyes of Liberia's factions.
3. The multinational force employed in this option permits the US to share the burden for restoring Liberia's stability with the international community. This reduces the US portion of the monetary cost of the operation. Perhaps more importantly, it also diminishes the impact on America's ability to confront two Major Regional Contingencies.

Disadvantages

1. Similar to option 2, the hasty departure of ECOMOG will deny the implementation force the benefit of its experience in Liberia. The MIF will have to function without a valuable source of institutional knowledge on the country's situation.
2. As mentioned above, the size of the US contingent employed in this option's multinational force will not solve all of the coordination and communication problems common to multilateral operations. These obstacles stem from differences in language, professional terminology, and unfamiliarity with the practices of other forces. However, the exchange of liaison officers can help to overcome these difficulties.
3. The US and the UN will require time to gather the necessary forces for a multilateral operation. National leaders and diplomats must gather the units from a number of contributing countries to fill the multinational force. Although preparations can go forward prior to identifying all of the participating forces, planners will not be able to resolve many issues until the various national contingents are determined.

Furthermore, the international community may not be able to meet all of the force requirements for the MIF. This could ultimately effect the size and types of US forces that deploy to Liberia. Additional American forces may have to fill the gaps created by these shortfalls.

IV. COMPARISON

Of the three alternatives, Option 1 presents the least complicated concept for introducing an implementation force into Liberia, while also calling for the smallest US force. In essence, US forces will enter the country and merely assume control of ECOMOGs ongoing efforts.

Additionally, the US will relieve ECOMOG of its duties in Monrovia, so that it can expand its operations outside the capital. Finally, the US will establish a rapid reaction force to respond to crisis facing any element of the MIF. Option 1, which incorporates the West African force into the MIF, has the greatest opportunity of culling the benefits of ECOMOGs seven years of practical experience in Liberia. ECOMOG should be able to provide advice on dealing with the factions and the populace, based on past experiences.

However, Option 1's reliance on ECOMOG presents obstacles that the US can not ignore. ECOMOG predetermined departure date, rather than the achievement of tangible results on the ground, drives the MIFs time table for replacing it with UN forces. This reduces the implementation force's flexibility. Additionally, the process of rotating ECOMOG for UN forces may delay the actual achievement of a secure and stable environment. Finally, and most importantly, the inclusion of ECOMOG in the MIF will damage the credibility of the entire implementation force in the eyes of many Liberians. That credibility is crucial to the success of the entire operation.

Option 1 employs a multilateral approach that, in theory, shares the burden of restoring stability in Liberia with the international community. However, under this option, international representation remains the West African countries currently engaged in Liberia, joined by the US. Finally, the lack of linguistic, cultural, and professional uniformity hinders operational control in all multinational operations. Combined training exercises, conducted before a deployment, can address many of the coordination, communication and control problems that are inherent in these operations. However, because ECOMOG is presently conducting operations in Liberia, such training opportunities are limited or nonexistent.

Option 2, which employs a unilateral approach, avoids the obstacles presented by ECOMOG. This option minimizes the contact between the US force and ECOMOG in order to draw a clear distinction between USIF and the West African force. This should prevent the Liberians from transferring their anti-ECOMOG sentiment to the US Implementation Force.

Under Option 2, the US accepts the loss of ECOMOG as a possible information source shortly after deploying. Finally, Option 2 has a greater degree of flexibility because the introduction of UN forces is contingent upon the achievement of a secure and stable environment and not the departure of ECOMOG.

Of the three alternatives, the unilateral method used in Option 2 exhibits the greatest degree of operational control because the implementation force is a homogeneous body. However, unilateral action has its shortcomings as well. This option relieves the international community of a responsibility to shoulder a portion of the burden in restoring stability in Liberia. Additionally, unilateral US action could lead to charges of colonial ambitions from within Africa and the Third World, damaging America's image and credibility in certain corners. Finally, and most importantly, Option 2 calls for a significantly larger US force than the other two options. The force package required by Option 2 has the greatest impact upon the ability of the US to contend with two Major Regional Contingencies.

Option 3 also eludes the hurdles presented by a reliance on ECOMOG, while allowing its loss as source of institutional knowledge. This option, like the second, minimizes the contact between the implementation force and ECOMOG, in order to protect the credibility of the MIF. Ultimately, Option 3 also maintains its flexibility by relying upon the restoration of secure and stable conditions in Liberia to initiate the deployment of UN forces.

Option 3 exhibits many of the same strengths and weaknesses as any multinational operation. It requires the members of the international community to contribute to the task of resurrecting Liberia. In this option, the size of the US contingent significantly enhances the operational control of the MIF, a perennial concern in multinational operations. Additionally, under Option 3, there may be an opportunity for combined training, if only at staff level, to address coordination and communication issues before the implementation force deploys to Liberia. Finally while this option employs a sizable US force, it is considerably less than unilateral action requires.

V. RECOMMENDATION

Option 3 is clearly the best policy option for reestablishing a secure and stable environment in Liberia. It avoids a reliance on the ECOMOG forces, whose tarnished reputation

and scheduled departure date could impede mission accomplishment. In contrast to Option 2's unilateral approach, Option 3's multilateral concept shares the burden of restoring Liberia's stability with the international community without sacrificing decisive American control and influence of the operation. Finally, while any deployment will have an effect on America's two MRC concept, Option 3 will have far less of an impact as its US force requirement is half the size of Option 2.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION

Actions Upon the SECDEFs Approval of the Policy

Liberia falls within the US European Command's area of responsibility. However, US Atlantic Command has executed noncombatant evacuation operations in Liberia, in 1990 and 1996. Due to European Command's sizable obligation in support of Operation Joint Guard (Bosnia), the National Command Authority should identify the Atlantic Command as the responsible unified command for any implementation force sent to Liberia.

The Department of Defense and the Atlantic Command should begin to establish a Civil-Military Operations Center (CMOC). The CMOC can begin monitoring current civilian efforts in Liberia, and initiate informal interagency coordination and planning. As part of its operational planning, The Atlantic Command should prepare for the introduction of a UN-led force coordinated with the departure of the US-led MIF as part of its exit strategy.

Actions Upon Presidential Approval

The US and the UN must coordinate their efforts in preparing to dispatch forces to Liberia. The UN mandate for intervention in Liberia must reflect the MIFs operational objectives and its Rules of Engagement. Also, the US and the UN should begin to gather the international forces needed to fortify the MIF and its successor, UNOMIL II, as expeditiously as possible. Combined predeployment training can begin after the US and UN have identified those countries willing to contribute forces for the MIF and UNOMIL II. At a minimum, the multinational forces will conduct staff coordination exercises.

Additionally, the UN can take several steps to facilitate the transition from US to UN control. As soon as possible, the UN should name a Special Representative of the Secretary

General for Liberia to lead UNOMIL II. Similarly, the US should recommend that an American officer be named commander of the military contingent of UNOMIL II, to facilitate the transition. This individual should also command the US contingent of the UN mission, in order to prevent friction between national and UN chains of command. Finally, the UN should deploy its planners to Liberia well in-advance of the transition to gain familiarity with the country's situation and key Liberian leaders.

VII. CONCLUSION

Liberians are clearly at a crossroads, as they emerge from years of conflict and initiate the lengthy process of refurbishing their country. The US and the UN should embark upon an intervention in Liberia with realistic expectations. After over seven years of civil war, rebuilding Liberia will require years to accomplish. While the deployment of the Multinational Implementation Force may last only six months, the need for an international presence will last much longer. To be a positive influence on the country's reconstruction, the international community should anticipate some level of commitment to Liberia for a decade.

External forces such as the MIF can only provide an environment of stability in shattered countries like Liberia. Only the Liberians themselves can address those internal issues that ignited the civil war. Failure to take the steps necessary to rectify those issues will mean that mounting any stability operation will be the equivalent of applying a Band-Aid to a festering, and potentially life, threatening wound.

Appendix A

The Factions

These movements continue to garner support from many Liberians, although they have officially dissolved. They have ceased combat operations, at least for the present time.

- **National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL)**

The NPFL espouses no particular ideology beyond advocating democracy. It attracted considerable support from Liberians weary of the dominance of the Krahn under Doe's rule. The bulk of the NPFL's membership comes from the Gio and Mano ethnic groups of Nimba county. When ECOMOG arrived in Liberia, the NPFL controlled ninety percent of the country. Taylor also formed a faction of dissidents from Sierra Leone, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). Taylor hoped that the RUF, which invaded Sierra Leone in March 1991, would pressure that country to withdraw its support for ECOMOG's efforts.

- **Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL)**

The AFL, led by General Heseekiah Brown, represents the vestiges of Samuel Doe's Krahn army. The AFL also includes Mandingo combatants in its ranks. This force has faded to less than 1,000 soldiers. During the renewed fighting in the spring of 1996, half of the AFL joined ULIMO against the NPFL, while the rest remained in their barracks in Monrovia.

- **United Liberation Movement of Liberians for Democracy (ULIMO)**

Krahn and Mandingo refugees in Sierra Leone formed ULIMO in the Spring of 1991, as a reaction to the RUF invasion. The main objective of ULIMO, which draws its support from the predominantly Mandingo areas of north-west Liberia, is to avenge the deaths of 10,000 Muslims at the hands of the NPFL. ULIMO later split into two additional forces:

- ULIMO-K, led by Alhaji Kromah, consists of predominantly Mandingo fighters,
- ULIMO-J, led by Roosevelt Johnson, is manned by predominantly Krahn fighters, many of whom served in the AFL.

- **The Liberian People's Council (LPC)**

The LPC is a Krahn force led by Dr. George Boley. Many of its members previously served in the AFL. It operated extensively in southeastern Liberia.

Appendix B

Refugees

The civil war created nearly 1.7 million Liberian refugees. Of that number, nearly seven hundred thousand people sought sanctuary in neighboring countries, while the remainder were dislocated within Liberia's borders. In May 1997, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), sighting Liberia's improved security situation, began urging the refugees to return to their homes in order to cast votes in the elections.

However, only a fraction of the refugees have ventured back to their homeland. The rainy season has hampered the repatriation process by making travel exceedingly difficult, and it will continue to do so until late October. The UNHCR, which will not begin formal repatriation procedures until September, estimates that the cumulative cost of returning the Liberians will be \$60 million. Currently, there are 420,000 Liberian refugees in Guinea, 210,000 in Ivory Coast, 17,000 in Ghana, 14,000 in Sierra Leone, and 6,000 in Nigeria.

Liberia must contend with its own refugee problem, as well. In recent months, one hundred and twenty thousand people from Sierra Leone have entered northern Liberia, fleeing their homeland after the May 25 coup. This sizable influx will place an additional burden on the country's slow healing process and its damaged infrastructure.

Appendix C

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